Charles D. Baker, Governor
Karyn E. Polito, Lieutenant Governor
Stephanie Pollack, MassDOT Secretary & CEO
Astrid Glynn, MassDOT Rail & Transit Administrator

massDOT
Massachusetts Department of Transportation
Rail & Transit Division

To: MassDOT Board

From: Astrid Glynn, Rail and Transit Administrator

Re: Recent Activities

Date: November 15, 2018

Transit:

RTA Task Force: The Task Force on Regional Transit Authority (RTA) Performance and Funding created by the FY19 Budget continues to meet. It has held 6 meetings and has had presentations on performance metrics, best practices, economic development, and human service transportation. Topics to be explored in December include funding and fare policy. The date by which the Task Force is to file a report has been extended until February 15, 2019.

FTA Drug and Alcohol Compliance Auditing Program: The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has found that MassDOT is now in compliance with the federally-mandated Drug and Alcohol Testing Program. FTA has provided MassDOT with a formal letter of compliance for the FTA's audit of the drug and alcohol testing programs in place at MassDOT and three of its sub recipients. The three sub-recipients are the rural Regional Transit Authorities: Martha's Vineyard Transit (VTA), Franklin Regional Transit Authority (FRTA) and Nantucket Regional Transit Authority (NRTA). MassDOT Transit staff has been working with all three RTAs to correct some initial findings and ensure submission of all required material.

FY19 MassDOT Discretionary Funding Program Application-Released to RTAs: As part of the FY19 state budget, Section 74 of Chapter 254 of the Acts of 2018 provided an additional $4m dollars for MassDOT to distribute to RTAs that are willing to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding incorporating certain best practices and that propose to initiate, maintain or expand service to a priority population. MassDOT is making the funds available to the RTAs on a competitive basis and encouraging the submission of projects that show innovation. RTAs can submit individually or jointly and are asked to identify metrics for success as well as a plan for financial sustainability if the project is successful. Prior to releasing the application to the RTAs, MassDOT met with legislators to brief them on the application content and submission timelines. The application was

released to the RTAs on Thursday, November 1; proposals will be due to MassDOT by November 30, 2018. Awards will be scored using criteria set forth in the Application notice.

Rail

East-West Passenger Rail Study: The Rail Division has been working closely with the Office of Transportation Planning (OTP) as OTP secured the services of a consultant team that will study east-west passenger rail between Western MA and Boston. This study was recommended as an action item in the recently completed Rail Plan. A team headed by WSP has been engaged to conduct the study which will formulate several alternatives for the corridor. A high speed alterative (90 minutes between Springfield and Boston) will be included. The route concepts studied may include right of way beyond the dimensions of the right of way currently used by Amtrak. The benefits of the studied services will be examined, as will the costs, local impacts, and the challenges of protecting freight and commuter capacity on the line. An Advisory group will be formed to represent interested parties along the entire corridor.

Capital Projects: Work continues on the Knowledge Corridor, both to complete the requirements of the initial FRA grant and to accelerate projects that might otherwise disrupt service during the Greenfield-Springfield pilot scheduled to start in 2019. This work includes 6 bridges and a number of culverts. Elsewhere on MassDOT owned rail lines, nine other bridges are being repaired or replaced- 2 on the Berkshire Line, 3 on the Framingham Secondary, 3 on the Ware River Secondary, and 1 on the Cape Main Line.

South Coast Rail Early Actions: Property Acquisition is advancing with 4 offers to purchase having been made and most of the Licenses to Access having been completed. Three bids were received for the Early Action Procurement for special track work.